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AUTHOR Rothlisberg, Allen P.
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a short history of the development of the only library/media technology program in the state of Arizona that offers courses especially designed for library technicians. A description is given of how the program evolved after a needs assessment was conducted in 1986, and approval was given by the Arizona State Community College board for Northland Pioneer College to grant a Certificate of Applied Science in Library/Media Technology and an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Library/Media Technology. The curriculum that was especially designed to meet rural needs is also discussed, with emphasis on: (1) instructional arrangements for teaching the curriculum in widely-scattered areas; (2) the development of courses to meet special student and community needs; and (3) the offering of a one unit course for school librarians based on a national video conference for school library personnel. Future plans are also discussed, including innovative courses and the use of audio and video teleconference systems. (11 references) (CGD)

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BLAZING NEW FRONTIERS: LIBRARY/MEDIA TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RURAL NORTHEASTERN ARIZONA

by

Allen P. Rothlisberg
Head Librarian
and
Instructor in Library/Media Technology

NORTHLAND PIONEER COLLEGE
Post Office Box 610
1200 East Hermosa Drive
Holbrook, Arizona 86025

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
HISTORICAL STATEMENT	1
CURRICULUM TO MEET RURAL NEEDS	4
TEACHING THE CURRICULUM IN A WIDELY-SCATTERED AREA	6
OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	8
MEETING CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS	9
ADDITIONAL INNOVATIONS	10
CONCLUSION	11
FOOTNOTES	13
BIBLIOGPAPHY	14

INTRODUCTION

On the pages that follow, I have attempted to write a short history of the library/media technology program at Northland Pioneer College. I have shown how the program has evolved, and incorporated current innovations as well as some future plans in my paper narrative.

Whenever possible, I have footnoted relevant material about the program, using the printed sources availble to me. Footnotes have been typed on a footnote page which follows the paper narrative. A bibliography follows the footnote page. The bibliographic format used for both the footnotes and the bibliography is that given in Kate L. Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, fourth edition, published by the University of Chicago Press in 1973.

The Library/Media Technology Program at Northland Pioneer College would not be in place today, without the efforts of Dr. Shirley A. Reed, Associate Dean for Learning Resources, who spearheaded the program in its present form.

I owe a tremendous amount of thanks, not only to Dr. Reed, but also to Dr. Arvin Palmer, Vice-President and Dean of Instruction at Northland Pioneer College, who allowed a dream to become a reality.

BLAZING NEW FRONTIERS:
LIBRARY/MEDIA TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RURAL NORTHEASTERN ARIZONA

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

This story really begins in January, 1975, when I came to Holbrook, Arizona, to accept a position as librarian at Northland Pioneer College, a new decentralized community college serving Northeastern Arizona.

It was my job to begin library services at this college. Classes had begun during the fall semester of 1974, so I was already a little late.

Early on, it was decided to have library services at four sites--Winslow, Holbrook, Snowflake and Show Low. Since it was not possible to begin with fully stocked libraries at these locations, I began by running a bookmobile. We were the only community college in Arizona to offer bookmobile service.

Soon it was decided to have small libraries in each one of these sites. I was given the responsibility of hiring clerical staff to staff these locations. Because of the decentralized, isolated location of Northland Pioneer College, I was not able to find trained clerks, and funding was not available to hire trained professional librarians for these positions. I had to train the employees from the ground up. I was also encouraged by

the administration to teach a general survey class called "Orientation to Librarianship."

I have long been interested in helping employees to document their training in a formal manner. Because of this, I designed several practical courses which would allow them to receive college credit for formal training and document through this credit, that the training had been received. News of what I was doing reached school and public libraries in the area, and I soon had other students enrolled in specially designed library technology classes. Training ranged from book and media selection to cataloging and classification, with several other courses as well. Several librarians serving other libraries in the area became interested, and served as resource persons and part-time faculty members.

While we were meeting local needs by teaching individualized courses, we were not able to offer any kind of degree or certificate. Courses were taught as LIB 199's or workshops. They met a definite need in our community college library settings, and the public and school libraries in our area were benefiting as well. Because of our success with this type of training, which met local, specalized needs, we decided to survey the area to see whether or not a legitimate need existed for a formal library/media technology certificate and degree program that could train paraprofessionals serving in isolated, rural areas.

A needs assessment was conducted in the spring of 1986. The survey states in part:

"All Navajo County public schools, public libraries, and the county library participated in the study. Respondents indicated a limited number of new positions would be available each year, with the greatest turnover being with the public school libraries.

"School libraries were the primary group to express a need for trained library media personnel with either a one year certificate or a two year Associate of Applied Science degree. 71% of the school libraries and 37% of the public libraries expressed a need for both the certificate and the degree.

"It is of interest that while a low number of the public libraries surveyed indicated they needed trained paraprofessionals, only one of the public libraries in the county is staffed by a professionally trained librarian. Also, there has been a marked increase in the number of public school library personnel taking library courses at Northland Pioneer College, which suggests the need is greater than the needs assessment indicates.

"It is recognized that the need in terms of numbers of students is limited, intermittent, and varied as evidenced by the needs assessment. There has been, however, a steady increase in enrollment and interest over the past two years.

"There is a criticial need to train this limited number of paraprofessionals staffing school and public libraries that are without the services of a professional librarian. As evidence of this need, the Arizona Department of Education has asked Northland Pioneer College to write a separate training grant to train paraprofessional library personnel serving in rural school and public libraries. This request was made because of the need for such training in Northeastern Arizona where no other agency is providing training for library paraprofessionals. This training grant has also been endorsed by the Arizona State Department of Library and Archives and the Arizona State Library Association."[1]

The needs assessment, program competencies, and course outlines were presented to the Arizona State Community College Board for approval in 1986. Permission was given

for Northland Pioneer College to grant a Certificate of Applied Science in Library/Media Technology, as well as a Associate of Applied Science degree in Library/Media Technology. Instruction for both the certificate and the degree began during the fall semester, 1987.

CURRICULUM TO MEET RURAL NEEDS

To succeed in a rural area, it was necessary to design courses to meet training needs for individuals serving in rural isolated areas, where the direct supervision of the professional librarian would not always be available. Individuals working in most libraries serving this area, would have to work independently most of the time. To be successful, the curriculum designed would have to take this into consideration. The core courses that were developed, each carrying three units of credit, are as follows:

LIB 102 - Introduction to Library Media Services
LIB 103 - Library Media Organization & Management
LIB 104 - Media Preparation and Application
LIB 105 - Equipment Organization & Utilization
LIB 106 - Technical Services & Cataloging I
LIB 107 - Reference Sources & Services I
LIB 108 - Public Services & Public Relations[2]

Upon completing these courses, totalling 21 credits, a student may earn a Certificate of Applied Science in Library/Media Technology. Deliberate emphasis has been placed on courses that would give training to students working in libraries and media centers meeting common, yet diverse needs. Modern libraries are no longer just book and magazine depositories. For this reason, two courses

in media have been given an important part of our program. Completion of these courses will enable students to deal with increasing amount of media now housed in modern libraries, as well as the sophisticated equipment that is used with the media. Most libraries are handling videotapes, cassette tapes, and phonograph recordings in addition to books and periodicals, and many libraries, especially those in community college and school settings, are handling a wide variety of additional media formats as well, together with corresponding equipment.

Students wishing an A. A. S. degree in library/media technology, must complete a minimum of 9 units of electives from a major area of emphasis. Courses may be chosen from the following list, all of which carry 3 credits, except as noted:

LIB 109 - Computer Applications in Library Media
LIB 110 - Young Adult & Children's Literature
LIB 105 - Equipment Trouble Shooting & Repair
LIB 207 - Reference Sources & Services II
LIB 208 - Revitalizing Library Media Services
LIB 209 - Current Trends & Issues in Library Media
LIB 198 - Cooperative Work/Educ. in Library Media (1-6 credits)
LIB 199 - Workshop (1-6 credits)
LIB 299 - Special Topics (1-4 credits)
CSC 100 - Introduction to Computer Science
CSC 160 - Introduction to Integrated Software
PHO 100 - Beginning Photography
PHO 110 - Beginning Video & Filmmaking
EDU 100 - Introduction to Education
BUS 210 - Principles of Management[3]

In addition to the above courses, from which the student may select a <u>minimum</u> of nine credits for electives, the student must complete a total of 28 credits of general education requirements, with a total of 64

credits required for the Associate of Applied Science degree. The general education requirements include courses from the following broad areas:

FOUNDATION STUDIES 12 credits
(Courses include: Career Awareness, Freshman English I, Freshman English II OR Technical Report Writing, OR Public Speaking, and math requirement)
DISCIPLINE STUDIES 14 credits
(Humanities: 6 credits from at least two of the following departments: Art, English, Humanities, Language, Music)
(Natural Science: 4 credits from any of the following departments: Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Physics)
(Social & Behavioral Sciences: 6 credits from any of the following departments: Anthropology, Business, Geology, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology)[4]

TEACHING THE CURRICULUM IN A WIDELY-SCATTERED AREA

Northland Pioneer College is a decentralized community college which serves an area of 21,000 square miles. The estimated permanent population in this area is approximately 100,000.[5] Instruction is done in several different geographical areas, but chiefly in the communities of Winslow, Holbrook, Snowflake, Show Low, Kykotsmovi (Hopi Reservation), Whiteriver (White Mountain Apache Reservation), Kayenta (Navajo Reservation), St. Johns and Springerville.

During the fall semester of 1988, the Library/Media Technology Program had a headcount of 67, with a full-time student equivalent of 12.80.[6] Because our students are located in each of the nine communities we serve, it has not been possible for us to have one full class in any of the communities. When the program started in the fall of 1987, we decided to try a new approach. In order that the classes

would go. and that students in all of these communities would have a chance to enroll in the library/media technology program. Courses are listed in the class schedule at each location. During the fall semester. 1988. I offered one of our new courses--LIB 220 - Church Librarianship--on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 P. M. to 10:00 P. M. in all nine communities. I published a schedule as to where I would be each Tuesday evening. and rotated between the communities. acting as a resource person. Each student received a packet of materials. together with the due dates for each assignment. Students were free to contact me during the time alloted for the class on Tuesday evenings. or during my established office hours. Students could use established college telephone service to contact me in my office. or at home. Students could use the college inter-campus mail service to send me their assignments. Communications back to the student. including corrected assignments. were returned to the student by U. S. Mail. From time to time. course announcements were mailed to each student. Mailing labels for this purpose are supplied by the registrar's office.

During the fall semester of 1988. two additional courses were taught in this fashion. LIB 102 - Introduction to Library Media Services. was taught on Thursday nights. LIB 107 - Reference Sources and Services I. was taught on Wednesday nights.

This arrangement seems to be working well. Students

are encouraged to ask all the questions they want, and constructive interaction between the student and instructor is an important asset of this instructive arrangement.

OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

In the fall of 1986, even before our program was approved or implemented, Mrs. Merrilyn Ridgeway, State School Library Consultant, Arizona State Department of Education, contacted us and asked if we would be interested in writing a grant to train rurally isolated paraprofessionals in Arizona's school and public libraries. We agreed to write a grant, which was endorsed by the Arizona Department of Education, the Arizona State Department of Library, Archives, and Public Records, and the Arizona State Library Association because Mrs. Ridgeway told us that there were ninety school districts in Arizona without any kind of library service.

When this grant was not funded, we were encouraged to write a similar grant in the spring of 1988 because statistics provided by the Arizona Department of Education and the Arizona State Department of Library, Archives, and Public Records, indicate there are 114 public libraries and 192 school libraries without professionally trained staff.[7]

The second grant, which is a scaled down version of the first grant, was not funded as well. Still, we felt that there remained a rather fundamental unmet need for training. Because of this, we decided to try an experiment.

We would offer two classes with a minimum of classroom instruction and a maximum of individualized instruction opportunities. Students would come together at the beginning of the semester for four hours to get their assignments, meet their instructor, and get the ground rules for the course. They would come together again at the semester's end to wrap up their assignments, and get some exit instructions, etc. We offered two courses in this manner during the fall of 1988. LIB 220 - Church Librarianship was offered, as well as LIB 102 - Introduction to Library Media Services. Enrollment was encouraging. For this reason, we will offer two additional courses in the spring--LIB 103 - Library Media Organization and Management, and LIB 106 - Technical Services and Cataloging.

MEETING CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS

During the spring of 1988, we offered a one unit course for school librarians, based on a national video conference for school library personnel. While there were several video sites around the state, we were the only site that offered the video conference experience for credit. Students were required to attend the video conference, and then write a short paper on how they had implemented their choice of suggestions learned from the video conference in their own particular library or media center situations. Seventy-five individuals attended the conference in Holbrook, and twenty-five received credit for their experience.

In the spring of 1989, we will offer another one unit course for school library personnel. This course is called "Cooperative Planning for School Libraries." Students will come together in Show Low and receive instruction from the Arizona Department of Education School Improvement Unit. They will take what they have learned and implement it in their own particular library or media center setting. After writing a paper about their experiences, they will receive credit.

ADDITIONAL INNOVATIONS

In order to interest new students in the program, and continue the involvement of those already enrolled, it is necessary to keep abreast of the times, and the particular needs of the communities we serve. A new course that is in the development stages for the spring semester is a course entitled "Managing the One Person Library." "Church Librarianship" was developed to meet special needs of the students in our communities. Not a course in theology, "Church Librarianship" offers each student an opportunity to learn the library skills necessary to serve as a librarian in a specialized library setting. Among other things, students learn how to successfully interact with other libraries in this course, in order that they might make the most use out of limited resources. Additional innovations will be made as the need arises.

In future years, it may be possible to put many of our library/media technology courses on the audio teleconference system or the video teleconference system. One course that

would be especially effective on the video teleconference system is our LIB 110 - Young Adult & Children's Literature. One reason for this is because of the colorful illustrations that are found in several good children's books. This would be a wonderful way to share the colored illustrations with everyone.

One of our greatest innovations is our consistantly low tuition requirements. Students may attend courses as state residents for only $6.00 per credit hour. Out of state students may take up to six credit hours for $11.00 per credit hour. We have had two students taking courses in our program from Reserve, New Mexico. One reason for this is because of the closeness of Reserve to Springerville, Arizona, one of our campus sites. Another may be our low tuition. Our low in-state tuition is a deciding factor in many cases, and I am sure that it alone attracts students.

CONCLUSION

Here, in a nutshell, are the basics of the library/media technology program as it is in place at Northland Pioneer College. It is the only rurally oriented program to train library technicians in the state of Arizona. Northland Pioneer College also is the one community college in Arizona offering a Certificate in Applied Science in Library/Media Technology at present.

Most of the success of the program lies in the fact that we have tried to be responsive to the needs of our

students and the communities that we serve. We have also tried to be supportive of state-wide needs to train library paraprofessionals as well, by responding to requests to write grants for the training of rurally isolated paraprofessionals in Arizona.

Next year, with changes in the way that summer sessions for community colleges can be funded, it may be possible for us to reach out to the paraprofessional library community with inexpensive, quality training, available during the summer months. It will be interesting to see what develops during the next few months.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Northland Pioneer College. State Community College Board. Application for Approval of New Curriculum, Library Media Technology (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, 1986), pp. 2-3.

[2]Northland Pioneer College, Catalog, 1987-88, 1988-89 (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, n. d.), p. 72.

[3]Northland Pioneer College, Catalog, 1987-88, 1988-89 (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, n. d.), p. 72.

[4]Northland Pioneer College, Catalog, 1987-88, 1988-89 (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, n. d.), pp. 51-52.

[5]Northland Pioneer College, Catalog, 1987-88, 1988-89 (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, n. d.), p. 7.

[6]Northland Pioneer College, Fall Semester 1988 Registration Statistics (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, 1988), p. 6.

[7]Northland Pioneer College, Application for Title IIB Library Career Training Program Summer Institute (Holbrook, Arizona: Northland Pioneer College, 1988), p. 2.

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